Sir, A Committee of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research recommended for establishing a Regional Centre of the Central Institute for Research on Goats in West Bengal. But with the acceptance of the recommendations of the ICAR Review Committee, which suggested that the State Agricultural Universities may in future undertake research works of regional importance, the Bidhan Chandra Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, West Bengal has been advised to take up research on goats relevant to the eastern region.

Foodgrain productivity in Punjab

2506. SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that productivity of foodgrains per hectare in Punjab is much higher than that of national average; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The yield rate of total foodgrains in Punjab during 1990-91 was 3390 Kgs. per hectare as against the All India average yield rate of 1382 Kgs. per hectare.

The higher per hectare productivity of foodgrains in Punjab may be attributed to higher proportion of irrigated area, greater diffusion of modern technology of high yielding varieties, higher fertilizer consumption per unit of area, better infrastructure and favourable agro-climatic conditions.

Starvation deaths in Orissa

2507. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Orissa High Court has finally confirmed starvation deaths in the poverty-stricken Kalanandi District in Orissa and awarded a compensation of Rs. 25,000|- to each of the affected families as per the news-item entitled "Compensation for starvation deaths", which appeared in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 15th February, 1992;

(b) if so, the number of such starvation deaths in Orissa and in other States|Union Territories in the country during the last 3 years, till date; and

(c) the steps Government have so far taken|propose to take to prevent such starvation deaths in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Five in Orissa, as confirmed by the Orissa High Court. No report of any starvation death during last three years has been received from any State Government|Union Territory Administration.

(c) Various poverty alleviation programmes like Drought Prone Area Programme, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and Integrated Rural Development Programme are being implemented in various parts of the country particularly in backward areas. The network of Public Distribution system is ensuring availability of foodgrains in critical areas. The State Governments have been advised to keep a close watch on the food availability and employment situation and institute timely measures to prevent the occurrence of deaths on account of hunger.

कृषि विज्ञान केन्द्र

2508. **कुमारी सुशीला तिरिया** : क्या कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) देश में कार्यरत कृषि विज्ञान केन्द्रों की राज्य-वार संख्या कितनी है ;

(ख) क्या विभिन्न राज्यों में ऐसे नए केन्द्र खोले जाने का कोई प्रस्ताव है ;